

Zone Text Change Analysis

August 13, 2008

ZT-11-2008

West Valley City

Landscape Berm Requirement Changes

West Valley City is proposing changes to the landscape berm requirement in the Off-Street Parking Requirements (Chapter 7-9) of the West Valley City Ordinances. The pertinent section, copied below, requires a minimum three foot high berm in the twenty foot wide landscape strip adjacent to a street.

7-9-113. LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING.

(1) Parking lots with five or more spaces must have a minimum of a 10-foot wide landscape strip in side yards adjacent to any street and a minimum of a 20-foot wide landscape strip in front yards. A 10-foot wide landscape strip shall incorporate a 2-foot high masonry screen wall with the landscaping sloping upward to the top of the wall. 20-foot wide landscape strips shall incorporate a berm with a minimum elevation of three feet above the adjacent sidewalk. Exterior perimeters of the parking lot, which are not adjacent to a street, shall have a minimum of a five-foot wide landscaping strip.

Staff is suggesting a modification to this section to eliminate the need for a berm in certain situations, such as not being able to meet drainage requirements in any other practical manner other than using swales, or using accepted techniques and materials as part of an energy efficient program (i.e. LEED certification) or an environmental enhancement program such as bioswales. The following restrictions would apply:

- The Planning Commission may consider this alternative as a conditional use on properties over ten (10) acres.
- Modification would be allowed only in an M zone.
- Allowed only on interior streets within the development.
- Not allowed on any high-image street or major arterial.
- A combination of hedges, shrubs, trees, landscape boulders, screen walls and similar devices shall be used to provide adjacent parking lot screening and variation.

These changes, if adopted, would be incorporated into Chapter 7-9-113(1), Landscaping and Screening, in the Off-Street Parking chapter. Suggested language for the changes would be:

“The Planning Commission may consider alternatives to the berming requirement as a conditional use on properties of at least ten (10) acres. This provision would apply only to properties in the Manufacturing (M) zone and only on interior streets within the development, not on any high-image arterial streets. Screening for adjacent parking lots would be required using a combination of hedges, shrubs, trees, landscape boulders, screen walls and similar devices.”

Included in the packet is some information on bioswales.

Staff Alternatives:

- Approval, subject to the resolution of any issues raised at the public hearing. The following requirements would apply:
 1. The Planning Commission may consider this alternative as a conditional use on properties over ten (10) acres.
 2. Modification would be allowed only in an M zone.
 3. Allowed only on interior streets within the development.
 4. Not allowed on any high-image street or major arterial.
 5. A combination of hedges, shrubs, trees, landscape boulders, screen walls and similar devices shall be used to provide adjacent parking lot screening and variation.
- Continuance, to allow for the resolution of any issues raised at the public hearing.
- Denial, as the current ordinance addresses the issues of landscaping and screening adequately and this text change is not necessary.